

III. Citizen Satisfaction Survey

A. Survey Process

The completion of a detailed citizen satisfaction survey was an integral part of the South Martineztown Sector Development Plan process. The survey was designed, developed and administered by Paulsen & Associates. Neighborhood leaders were closely involved in the survey process, assisting with survey formulation, administration and collection. The primary goal of neighborhood leaders was to achieve a household participation rate of 100%, involving the entire neighborhood in the sector plan process. Although this goal was not achieved, 66% of area households participated in the survey, the response rate compares favorably to typical response rates in the 20 - 30% range for neighborhood surveys.

1. Goals of the Survey:

- Provide an opportunity for residents to air their views and participate in the planning process
- Gauge neighborhood concerns
- Guide the sector planning process and the development of plan recommendations
- Develop a survey instrument and process that the neighborhood can reuse in future survey efforts
- Establish a benchmark of citizen satisfaction which can be tracked over time

2. Survey Development:

The survey was developed with neighborhood cooperation. Several drafts of the survey were reviewed and amended by a committee of neighborhood residents. In addition, Professor Richard Nordhaus, UNM School of Architecture and Planning, provided extensive comments on the survey document. Professor Nordhaus participated in the South Martineztown Urban Renewal Program in the early 1970s. Dr. Judith Keller, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources for Albuquerque Public Schools, provided revision comments and conducted a training session for area residents who administered the survey. Dr. Keller had conducted survey work within the neighborhood in the process of developing a 1993 performance report on former Longfellow students.

3. Process:

The survey was administered door to door by trained neighborhood volunteers. The vast majority of surveys were conducted through face to face interviews. Following an explanation of the survey and sector plan process, volunteers simply read the survey to respondents and noted the responses directly on the survey forms. Responses remained confidential. In cases where volunteers were unable to contact residents after numerous site visits, a copy of the survey was left at the residence along with written explanation of the survey's purpose and directions for completion and return.

4. Profile of Respondents:

According to the 1990 Bureau of Census, South Martineztown has 201 households. Of that number, 134 participated in the survey. Generally, respondents were somewhat older and had lived in the neighborhood longer than the neighborhood average. Since the survey was completed by heads of households, this was expected. It was also anticipated that longer term residents would be more inclined to participate in the survey as they are generally perceived to have a greater stake in the neighborhood. Only 15 respondents were under 36; forty percent were 65 or older. Eighty-four of the 134 respondents were female. Just under half of the respondents have lived in the neighborhood over 10 years. Seventy respondents listed the City of Albuquerque as their landlord. The largest occupation category was retired, with 40 responses listed. Ten respondents listed their occupation as homemakers and the remaining responses were widely distributed. Occupations listed included: teacher, nurse, counselor, student, architect, economist and artist.

B. Findings:

1. Overview

Survey respondents generally like the South Martineztown neighborhood. Residents like living in the neighborhood, even though there is a high percentage of renters. This is particularly noteworthy since half of the area households occupy public housing and are not given a choice of where they live. Responses to the Question: "What is your level of satisfaction with the quality of life in South Martineztown?" are revealing: 27 selected great; 75 good; 25 adequate; only 5 answered poor or intolerable.

Respondents find the neighborhood to be convenient in terms of health care, schools and employment and find the design and appearance of the neighborhood to be good.

Most respondents believe the neighborhood is improving or staying about the same. However, there are several areas of concern. Crime and security were the top concerns; other major concerns included: maintenance, particularly sidewalks; graffiti; traffic; recreational opportunities for youth.

Crime and security are major issues, which is not surprising for a neighborhood with a high percentage of elderly and with an elementary school within its boundaries. The very young and very old are perceived as being more vulnerable to crime. The most numerous written response to any open-ended question in the survey related to the desire of respondents for more police patrols. Better lighting was second on the list. While most respondents indicated that they feel safe most of the time, respondents are ready to become involved in making the neighborhood safer. Over 100 respondents would consider getting involved in a Neighborhood Watch program.

2. Conclusions:

The South Martineztown Citizen Satisfaction Survey reveals the neighborhood's unique attributes and challenges. The neighborhood is characterized by high percentages of public housing occupants and senior citizens. Consequently, as a group, the neighborhood is more dependent on public services and facilities than comparably sized areas. While statistics indicate fairly low levels for most crimes, area residents are deeply concerned about security and indicate a willingness to participate in crime prevention measures. Maintenance of public facilities is important since many residents are less mobile than the population at large and may be more dependent and concerned about the quality of public facilities than other citizens. Regardless of demographic and home ownership patterns, area residents like this neighborhood. The overwhelmingly positive response to resident satisfaction with the area indicates that the neighborhood works and is a desirable place to live.

See Appendix A. for a tabulation of survey results.